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ABSTRACT

Many researchers have cited the trauma of divorce as being second only to that incurred by the death of child. Yet divorce does not mean the end of a family or of parenting responsibilities. This book focuses on co-parenting and how real divorced parents attempt to make a "family apart" function successfully. The stories and quotes were taken from a questionnaire involving 112 adults and 34 children dealing with co-parenting and post-divorce relationships. In addition, personal experiences with divorce and co-parenting are given as examples. Although there is no formula for successful co-parenting, the book describes ten "keys" to sound parenting. Following a chapter describing how the book came about, the subsequent ten chapters deal with each of these ten keys. The chapter titles, followed by their respective keys, are: (1) "Getting through the Fire"--Heal yourself after a divorce; (2) "Growing Up after a Divorce"--Act maturely; (3) "A Delicate Balance"--Listen to your children; (4) "Bad Spouse/Good Parent"--Respect each other as parents; (5) "New Families/New Forms"--Divide parenting time; (6) "The Business of Co-Parenting"--accept each other's differences; (7) "The Parental Hotline"--Communicate about (and with) the children; (8) "The Mix-'n'-Match Parent"--Step outside traditional gender roles; (9) "Going with the Flow" --Anticipate and accept change; and (10) "'Til Death Do You Part"--Know that co-parenting is forever. A final chapter provides a personal postscript on divorce as a social phenomenon and the rise of joint parenting. Three appendices contain the "Families Apart" questionnaire, a sample parenting agreement, and a list of additional resources on divorce, conflict management, parenting, and career networking. (BGC)

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